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pets, wildlife

u.s. customs

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Travelers frequently inquire about taking their pets with them to the United States. All importations are subject to health, quarantine, agriculture, wildlife, and customs requirements and prohibitions. Pets taken out of the United States and returned are subject to the same requirements as those entering for the first time.

As heartless as it may seem, pets excluded from entry into the United States must either be exported or destroyed. While awaiting disposition, the pet will be detained at the owner's expense at the port of arrival.

The U.S. Public Health Service requires that pets—particularly dogs, cats, and turtles—brought into this country be examined at the first port of entry for possible evidence of disease that can be transmitted to humans.

The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service requires that animals and birds, both domestic and wild, be free from contagious, infectious, communicable diseases in order to protect our livestock and poultry industry. Certain animals are prohibited entry by law. Any ruminant (cud-chewing animal) or swine shipped from or transiting through an area where foot-and-mouth disease exists is prohibited from entry. Such prohibited animals must be sent out of the country on the same carrier on which they arrive, within a time fixed by the Department of Agriculture, or be destroyed.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is concerned with the importation, trade, sale, and taking of wildlife and protection of endangered species, both plant and animal. Some wildlife species of dogs, cats, turtles, reptiles, and birds, although imported as pets, may be listed as endangered. Endangered and threatened animal and plant wildlife, migratory birds, marine mammals, and certain injurious wildlife may not be imported without special Federal permits. Sportsmen will find the information under the section on wildlife of particular interest, as game birds and animals are subject to special entry requirements.

We also suggest that you check with state, county, and municipal authorities as to any local restrictions on importing a pet.

For information on requirements of the country into which you will take your pet, write to the respective Embassy in Washington, D.C., or the nearest consular office.

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general customs information

All birds and animals must be imported under humane and healthful conditions. Customs regulations require that careful arrangements be made with the carrier for suitable cages, space, ventilation, and protection from the elements. Cleaning, feeding, watering, and other necessary services must be provided. Under the 1976 amendment of the Animal Welfare Act, the Department of Agriculture is responsible for setting standards concerning the transportation, handling care, and treatment of animals.

Every imported package or container of pets must be plainly marked, labeled, or tagged on the outside with the names and addresses of the shipper and consignee, along with an accurate invoice statement specifying the number of each species contained in the shipment.

Since hours of service and availability of inspectors of the agencies involved may vary from port to port, you are strongly urged to check with your anticipated port of arrival prior to importing a pet or other animal. This will assure expeditious processing and reduce the possibility of unnecessary delays.

customs duty

Dogs, cats, and turtles are free of duty.Other pets imported into the United States if subject to a customs duty may be included in your customs exemption if they accompany you and are imported for your personal use, not for sale.

purebred animals

Purebred animals imported for breeding purposes are free of duty under certain conditions. A declaration is required to show that the importer is a citizen of the United States; the animal is imported specifically for breeding purposes; the animal is identical with the description in the certificate of pedigree presented; and the animal is registered in a book of registry in the country of origin recognized by the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

An application to the Department of Agriculture on form VS 17-338 for a certificate of purebreeding must be furnished before the animal is examined at the designated port of entry. For complete information write to Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service.

birds

All birds, including those taken out of the country and being returned, are subject to controls and restrictions.

To prevent outbreaks of the exotic Newcastle disease, the following U.S. Department of Agriculture controls and restrictions became effective January 15, 1980.

■ Birds must be quarantined upon arrival, for at least 30 days in a USDA-operated facility at the owners expense. These facilities are located in the following cities: New York, Laredo, San Ysidro, Honolulu, Miami, El Paso, Los Angeles, Brownsville, and Nogales. The cost is $80 per bird or $100 if two birds share a cage; cost is subject to change.

■ Quarantine space must be reserved in advance by submitting VS Form 17-23 with a deposit of $40 (check or money order.) The form is available from USDA offices, American consulates, and Embassies.

■ A health certificate executed within 30 days prior to entry by the national veterinarian of the country of export must accompany the bird and affirm that the bird has been examined, shows no evidence of communicable disease and is being exported in accordance with the laws of that country. Health certificate on VS form 17-23 may be used.

■ The bird must be removed from the quarantine facility within 5 days of notification of release. Arrangements for transportation and cost involved are the owner's responsibility.

■ Bird(s) from Canada that have been in the owner's possesion for 90 days or more preceding the date of importation and found healthy upon veterinary inspection at one of the designated Canadian border ports of entry where veterinarians are stationed are exempt from the 30-day quarantine.

■ Pet bird(s) originating in the United States that have been outside the country for not more than 60 days may be reimported without being quarantined provided they are accompanied by a U.S. veterinary health certificate. This certificate must be obtained prior to departure from USDA and include the same legband or tattoo number as the one on the bird being imported.

■ In addition, special Federal permits may be required by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the importation of live or dead migratory birds, including feathers, parts, and mounted specimens, and for certain live injurious or endangered birds.

cats

All domestic cats must be free of evidence of diseases communicable to man when examined at the port of entry. If the animal is not in apparent good health, further examination by a licensed veterinarian may be required at the expense of the owner.

Vaccination against rabies is not required for cats.

dogs

Domestic dogs must be free of evidence of diseases communicable to man when examined at the port of entry. Dogs to be used with livestock must be examined for tapeworms at the port of entry and, if found infested, must be freed of tapeworms.

vaccination

Dogs must be vaccinated against rabies at least 30 days prior to entry into the United States, except for puppies less than 3 months of age and for dogs originating or located for 6 months or more in areas designated by the Public Health Service as being rabies free.

. The following procedures pertain to dogs arriving from areas not free of rabies:

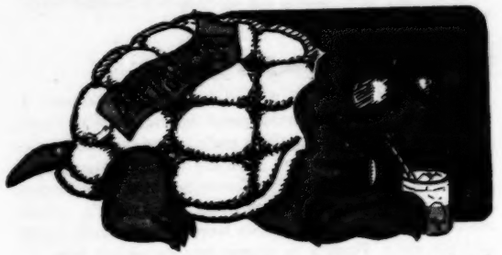
- A valid rabies vaccination certificate should accompany the dog. This certificate should identify the dog, specify the date of vaccination, date of expiration, and bear the signature of a licensed veterinarian. If no date of expiration is specified, the certificate is acceptable if the date of vaccination is no more than 12 months before the date of arrival.
- If the vaccination has not been accomplished or the certificate is not valid, the dog may be admitted provided the owner has the dog confined and vaccinated within 4 days after arrival at destination but no more than 10 days after arrival at port of entry. It must be kept in confinement for at least 30 days after the date of vaccination.
- If the vaccination was received less than one month before arrival, the dog may be admitted but shall be placed in confinement by the owner until at least 30 days have passed since the vaccination.
- Young puppies must be confined at a place of the owner's choice until they are 3 months of age and then must be vaccinated. Vaccination must be followed by a confinement of 30 days.
- Vaccination and inspection by the Public Health Service of wild dogs and wild cats is no longer required.

monkeys

All monkeys and other nonhuman primates, such as lemurs, baboons, and chimpanzees, may not be imported into the United States except for scientific, educational, or exhibition purposes by an importer registered with the Centers for Disease Control. In addition, permits may be required by the Fish and Wildlife Service for certain endangered species of nonhuman primates.

Remember, certain wildlife species of cats, dogs, birds, turtles, and reptiles are listed as endangered. Permits for importation may be required by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

turtles



A person may import live turtles with a carapace length of less than 4 inches and viable turtle eggs into the United States, provided that for each arrival, no more than one lot containing fewer than seven live turtles or fewer than seven viable turtle eggs, or any combination thereof totaling fewer than seven. There are no Public Health Service restrictions on the importation of live turtles with a carapace length of more than 4 inches.

wildlife

Wildlife and fish are subject to certain prohibitions, restrictions, permit, and quarantine requirements. This includes:

- Wild birds, animals, marine mammals, reptiles, crustaceans, fish, mollusks;
- Any part or products, such as feathers, skins, eggs; and articles manufactured from wildlife.

Federal laws prohibit the importation and/or transportation of any wildlife or parts thereof, in violation of state or foreign laws.

Ports designated for entry of all fish and wildlife are Chicago, Honolulu, Los Angeles, Miami, New Orleans, New York, San Francisco, and Seattle. All packages and containers must be marked, labeled or tagged to plainly indicate the name and address of the shipper and consignee, and the number and kind of the contents. Wildlife in any form, including pets, imported into the U.S. must be declared on U.S. Fish and Wildlife form 3-177 (Declaration for Importation of Fish and Wildlife).

game birds and animals

Game birds and animals, other than endangered species, legally taken in a foreign country may be imported for non-

commercial purposes at any Customs port of entry and declared on Customs form 3315. Game must be accompanied by a valid hunting license, tags, stamps, or export document if such is required. Only U.S. residents may import game duty free. They may import only those migratory game birds legally killed by themselves. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service publishes the limits on migratory game birds prior to each hunting season. Hunters should familiarize themselves with the restrictions placed on migratory game birds lawfully taken during the open season in other countries.

endangered species

The United States is a party to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora. This treaty regulates trade in endangered species of wildlife and plants and products thereof. International trade in species listed by the Convention is unlawful unless authorized by permit. This includes, for example, articles made from whale teeth, certain ivory, tortoise shell, reptile and fur skins. Permits to import into or export from the United States or re-export certificates are issued by the Federal Wildlife Permit Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Information on wildlife and plants, including lists of endangered species, should be obtained from the Fish and Wildlife Service.

Although essential requirements are provided in this leaflet, all regulations cannot be covered in detail. If you have any questions, or are in doubt, write or call your local Customs office or the specific agency mentioned. Their addresses are:

U.S. Public Health Service
Centers for Disease Control
Division of Quarantine
Atlanta, Georgia 30333
Tel. (404) 329-2574

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Hyattsville, Md. 20782
Tel. (301) 436-7786

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240
Tel. (202) 343-9242

Department of the Treasury
U.S. Customs Service
Washington, D.C. 20229

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